

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A system for reducing congestion in an Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC), ~~the system comprising a network element that comprises~~  
comprising:

an Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC);

a network element separate from, and in communication with, the OMC, the  
network element comprising:

a filter receiving event notifications from processes within the network element and providing a plurality of filtered event notifications, wherein each event notification of the plurality of event notifications notifies of a different event;

an event counter module coupled to the filter for receiving the plurality of filtered event notifications from the filter and counting a quantity of filtered event notifications to produce event counter information; and

a performance measurement module coupled to the event counter module for receiving the event counter information from the event counter module and sending alarms to the OMC.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the filter is operable to select the filtered event notifications to be sent to the event counter module.

3. (Previously presented) The system of claim 2, wherein selection criteria upon which the filter selects the filtered event notifications are established by the Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC).

4. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein the Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC) requests creation of event count objects upon which the event counter module creates event count information from the filtered event notifications

5. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the event counter module establishes threshold crossing criteria and alarm emission criteria for the performance measurement module.

6. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein the performance measurement module emits an alarm to the Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC) if the event counter information exceeds a threshold.

7. (Currently Amended) A method for reducing the number of event notifications sent to an Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC) by a network element serviced by separate from the OMC, the method comprising the steps of:

filtering, by the network element, event notifications to provide a plurality of filtered event notifications, wherein each event notification of the plurality of event notifications notifies of a different event;

counting, by the network element, the plurality of filtered event notifications to generate event count information from the filtered event notifications; and

conveying, by the network element ~~an alarm~~ to the OMC, an alarm if the event count information exceeds a threshold.

8. (Previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein filtering event notifications comprises the steps of:

receiving the event notifications; and

selecting the event notifications based on selection criteria to provide filtered event notifications.

9. (Previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein counting the event notifications comprises the steps of:

receiving filtered event notification;

incrementing an event count based on performance measurement definitions for each of the filtered event notifications; and

establishing event count information specific to each of the filtered event notifications based on event count criteria.

10. (Previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein emitting an alarm when the event count exceeds a threshold comprises the steps of:

- comparing the event count information against a threshold;
- emitting an alarm to the Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC) if the event count information exceeds the threshold; and
- resetting the event count information if an alarm is emitted to the Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC).

11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC) establishes criteria for selection of event notifications.

12. (Previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC) requests creation of event counter objects having information on thresholding and alarm notification.

13. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein a group of event notifications may be selected and counted as one event.

14. (Currently Amended) A network element separate from, and in communication with, an Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC), the network element ~~An apparatus for reducing the number of event notifications sent to an Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC) by a network element serviced by the OMC~~ comprising:

- means for filtering to provide a plurality of filtered event notifications, wherein each event notification of the plurality of event notifications notifies of a different event;
- means for counting to generate event count information from the plurality of filtered event notifications; and
- means for conveying alarms to the OMC based on the event count information.

15. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the filtering means comprise:

- means for receiving the event notifications; and
- means for selecting the event notifications based on filtering criteria to provide filtered event notifications.

16. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the counting means comprises:

- means for receiving filtered event notifications from the filtering means;
- means for incrementing an event count based on performance measurement definitions for each of the filtered event notifications; and
- means for establishing event count information specific to each of the filtered event notifications based on event count criteria.

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the means for emitting alarms to the Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC) comprise:

- means for comparing the event count information against a threshold;
- means for emitting an alarm to the Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC) if the event count information exceeds the threshold; and
- means for resetting the event count information if an alarm is emitted to the Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC).

18. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC) establishes filtering criteria for the filtering means.

19. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC) requests creation of event count criteria for the counting means.

20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein a group of event notifications may be selected by the filtering means and considered as one event by the counting means.